

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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February 11, 1999 LB 152, 359

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The committee amendments are adopted. Discussion on the advancement of LB 152? Senator Wehrbein is recognized. Senator Wehrbein waives off. Seeing no lights, Senator Thompson, you're recognized to close on the advancement of LB 152.

SENATOR THOMPSON: I'll waive closing.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Thompson waives closing. Question before us is the advancement of LB 152. Those in favor vote aye; those opposed nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 27 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on the advancement of 152.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The bill is advanced. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 359, by Senator Dwite Pedersen. (Read title.) Bill was introduced on January 13, referred to the Transportation Committee for hearing, advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill at this time, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Chair recognizes, to open on LB 359, Senator Dwite Pedersen.

SENATOR Dw. PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature. LB 359 changes the eligibility criteria for specialized telecommunications equipment for deaf, hard-of-hearing, and speech-impaired persons by eliminating the current income guidelines. It is my understanding that the funding for the equipment distribution program comes from the Nebraska Telecommunications Relay System Fund, which is financed by the six-cent surcharge on every telephone line, one cent of which is earmarked for the equipment distribution program. This one cent generates approximately \$163,000 per year. Since the inception of the program in 1996, only 138,000 has been expended. I believe it has been shown that both the Public Service Commission and the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing are prudent in the use of the equipment fund and neither agency has applied any personal cost to this program,